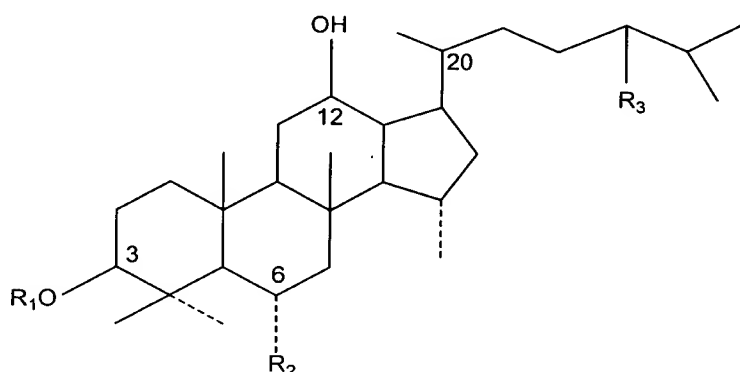


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims, in which pending or withdrawn claims 1 - 3, 7 - 10, 12, 14, 16 - 23, 25, 27 - 65 are cancelled, replaces all prior versions and listing of claims in the application. Claims 27 - 34 (pending) and 66 -69 (withdrawn) remain in this application.

Claims 1 - 26. (Canceled)

Claim 27. (Currently Amended) A process of preparing a sapogenin ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ according to the formula:



wherein R₁ is H; or glc, R₂ is H or OH, R₃ is H or OH; and when R₁, R₂ and R₃ are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R₁ is H, R₂ is OH and R₃ is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R₁ is glc, R₂ is H and R₃ is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); which process comprises:

producing a ginsenoside extract from plants selected from the group consisting of panax ginseng, panax quinguefol and panax notoginseng, or a sapogenin source from some other plant, and proceeding according to the following steps:

- (a) mixing the ginsenoside extract with water;
- (b)
 - (i) mixing the ginsenoside extract and water with a short-chain (1-5 carbon) alkali-metal alcoholate solution or a hydroxide-ethanol solution to produce a mixture; and
 - (ii) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions under ~~required~~ high temperature and high pressure effective to produce sapogenins therefrom; or

- (c) (i) alternatively, mixing the ginsenosides extract with ethanol;
- (ii) mixing the extract and ethanol with alkali-metal alcoholates solution to produce a mixture, and
- (iii) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions under ~~required~~ high temperature and high pressure effective to produce sapogenins therefrom;
- (d) after the reaction is completed, collecting an intermediate product of a mix of ginsenosides and sapogenins from the ethanol mixture; and
- (e) separating the desired sapogenins from the intermediate saponin-sapogenin mixture by silica-gel-column chromatography.

Claim 28. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 27 wherein the alkali metal can be potassium or sodium.

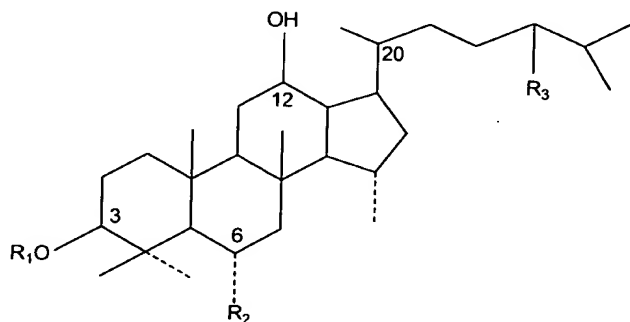
Claim 29. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 27 wherein the hydroxide can be sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide.

Claim 30. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 27 wherein the alkali-metal alcoholates solution or the concentration of hydroxide-ethanol solution is 5~50% (W/V).

Claim 31. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 27 wherein the alkali-metal alcoholate ~~ethanol~~ has 1~5 carbon atoms.

Claim 32. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 27 wherein the temperature of the reaction tank is between 150~300°C and the reaction pressure is between 2.5~8.4 MPa.

Claim 33. (Currently amended) A process of preparing a sapogenin ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ according to the formula:

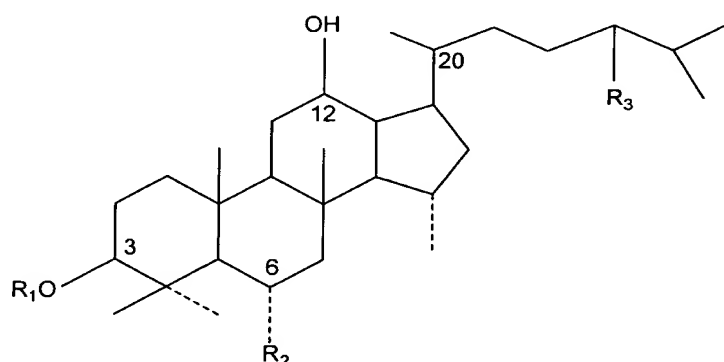


wherein R_1 is H; or glc, R_2 is H or OH, R_3 is H or OH; and when R_1 , R_2 and R_3 are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R_1 is H, R_2 is OH and R_3 is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R_1 is glc, R_2 is H and R_3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); which process comprises:

producing a ginsenoside extract from plants selected from the group consisting of panax ginseng, panax quinguefol and panax notoginseng, and proceeding according to the following steps:

- (a) mixing the ginsenoside extract with water;
- (b) mixing the ginsenoside extract and water with a short-chain (1-5 carbon) alkali-metal alcoholate solution or a hydroxide-ethanol solution to produce a mixture; and
- (c) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions under ~~required~~ high temperature and high pressure effective to produce sapogenins therefrom; and
- (d) after the reaction is completed, collecting an intermediate product of a mix of ginsenosides and sapogenins from the ethanol mixture; and
- (e) separating the desired sapogenins from the intermediate saponin-sapogenin mixture by silica-gel-column chromatography.

Claim 34. (Currently Amended) A process of preparing a sapogenin ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ according to the formula:



wherein R_1 is H; or glc, R_2 is H or OH, R_3 is H or OH; and when R_1 , R_2 and R_3 are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R_1 is H, R_2 is OH and R_3 is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R_1 is glc, R_2 is H and R_3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); which process comprises:

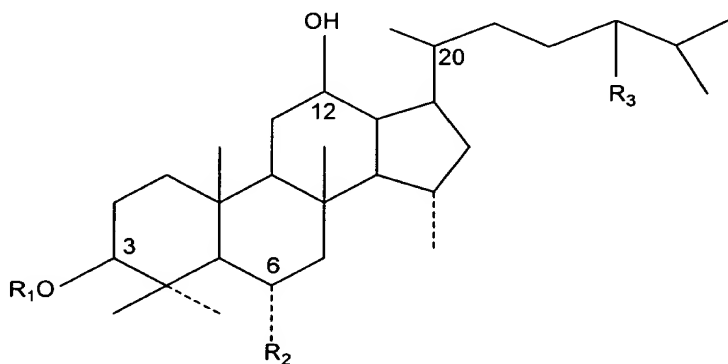
producing a ginsenoside extract from plants selected from the group consisting of panax ginseng, panax quinquefol and panax notoginseng, and proceeding according to the following steps:

- (a) mixing the ginsenosides extract with ethanol;
- (b) mixing the extract and ethanol with alkali-metal alcoholates solution to produce a mixture, and
- (c) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions under ~~required~~ high temperature and high pressure effective to produce sapogenins therefrom;
- (d) after the reaction is completed, collecting an intermediate product of a mix of ginsenosides and sapogenins from the ethanol mixture; and
- (e) separating the desired sapogenins from the intermediate saponin-sapogenin mixture by silica-gel-column chromatography.

Claims 35 - 65. (Canceled)

Claim 66. (Withdrawn) The process as claimed in claim 27 wherein the temperature of the reaction tank is between 240-300°C and the reaction pressure is between 3.5 - 8.4 MPa.

Claim 67. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A process of preparing a sapogenin ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ according to the formula:



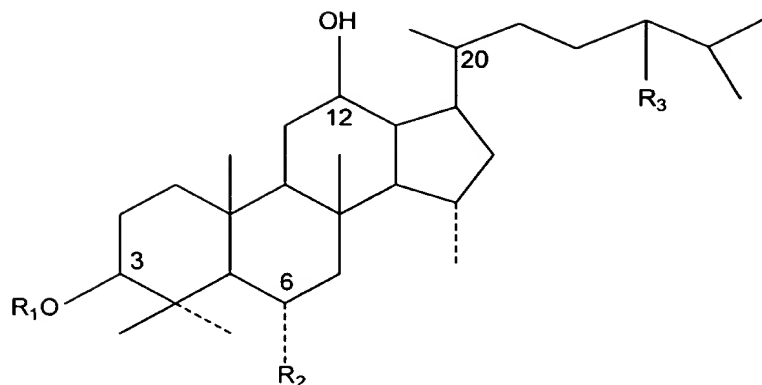
wherein R₁ is H; or glc, R₂ is H or OH, R₃ is H or OH; and when R₁, R₂ and R₃ are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R₁ is H, R₂ is OH and R₃ is OH, there are

double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R₁ is glc, R₂ is H and R₃ is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); which process comprises:

producing a ginsenoside extract from plants selected from the group consisting of panax ginseng, panax quinquefol and panax notoginseng, or a sapogenin source from some other plant, and proceeding according to the following steps:

- (a) mixing the ginsenoside extract with water;
- (b)
 - (i) mixing the ginsenoside extract and water with a short-chain (1-5 carbon) alkali-metal alcoholate solution or a hydroxide-ethanol solution to produce a mixture; and
 - (ii) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions at a temperature between 240 - 300°C and at a pressure between 3.5 - 8.4 MPa; or
- (c)
 - (i) alternatively, mixing the ginsenosides extract with ethanol;
 - (ii) mixing the extract and ethanol with alkali-metal alcoholates solution to produce a mixture, and
 - (iii) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions at a temperature between 240 - 300°C and at a pressure between 3.5 - 8.4 MPa;
- (d) after the reaction is completed, collecting an intermediate product of a mix of ginsenosides and sapogenins from the ethanol mixture; and
- (e) separating the desired sapogenins from the intermediate saponin-sapogenin mixture by silica-gel-column chromatography.

Claim 68. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A process of preparing a sapogenin ~~as~~ claimed in claim 1 according to the formula:

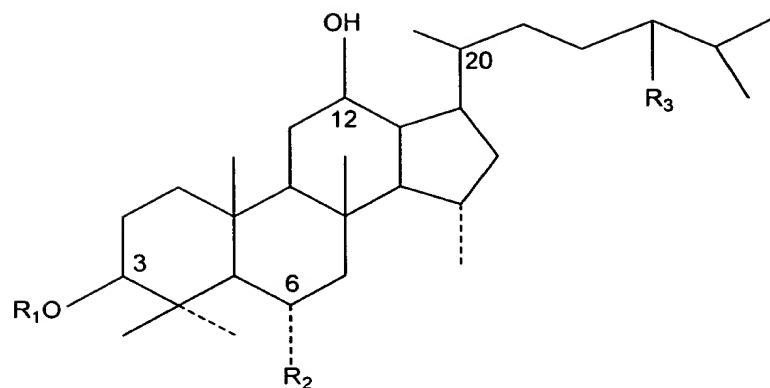


wherein R_1 is H; or glc, R_2 is H or OH, R_3 is H or OH; and when R_1 , R_2 and R_3 are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R_1 is H, R_2 is OH and R_3 is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R_1 is glc, R_2 is H and R_3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); which process comprises:

producing a ginsenoside extract from plants selected from the group consisting of panax ginseng, panax quinguefol and panax notoginseng, and proceeding according to the following steps:

- (a) mixing the ginsenoside extract with water;
- (b) mixing the ginsenoside extract and water with a short-chain (1-5 carbon) alkali-metal alcoholate solution or a hydroxide-ethanol solution to produce a mixture;
- (c) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions at a temperature between 240 - 300°C and a pressure between 3.5 - 8.4 MPa;
- (d) after the reaction is completed, collecting an intermediate product of a mix of ginsenosides and sapogenins from the ethanol mixture; and
- (e) separating the desired sapogenins from the intermediate saponin-sapogenin mixture by silica-gel-column chromatography.

Claim 69. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A process of preparing a sapogenin ~~as~~ claimed in claim 1 according to the formula:



wherein R_1 is H; or glc, R_2 is H or OH, R_3 is H or OH; and when R_1 , R_2 and R_3 are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R_1 is H, R_2 is OH and R_3 is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R_1 is glc, R_2 is H and R_3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); which process comprises:

producing a ginsenoside extract from plants selected from the group consisting of panax ginseng, panax quinquefol and panax notoginseng, and proceeding according to the following steps:

- (a) mixing the ginsenosides extract with ethanol;
- (b) mixing the extract and ethanol with alkali-metal alcoholates solution to produce a mixture, and
- (c) placing the resultant mixture in a reaction tank so that the resultant mixture can undergo chemical reactions at a temperature between 240 - 300°C and a pressure between 3.5 - 8.4 MPa;
- (d) after the reaction is completed, collecting an intermediate product of a mix of ginsenosides and sapogenins from the ethanol mixture; and
- (e) separating the desired sapogenins from the intermediate saponin-sapogenin mixture by silica-gel-column chromatography.